

## EXHIBIT-7

## LITIGANTS ALLEGE BUDGET CUTS, VACANCIES VIOLATE RIGHT TO PROMPT TRIAL

September 29, 2010



A lawsuit filed against the State of New Hampshire alleges state budget cuts slashing millions of dollars from the court system violate the New Hampshire Constitution's guarantee of a prompt civil jury trial.

Former Congressman and state Supreme Court Justice Chuck Douglas and eight other lawyers filed the suit on behalf of four plaintiffs, who claim that the state has canceled all civil schedules in several courts, and that "the denial of civil jury trials for almost a year on top of normal scheduling is unconstitutional," *The National Law Journal* reports. The petition also laments the impact of judicial vacancies, reduced hours and furlough days on the operation of the courts.

A letter from New Hampshire Supreme Court Chief Justice John Broderick Jr. posted on the court's website in June says the court system "has been hit especially hard." "[T]o families in crisis, prosecutors trying to protect communities and civil litigants trying to protect their rights and property, the budget resources we have now will not be enough," Justice Broderick wrote in the letter. "Please know that we are doing all we can to keep the system from failing further."

Douglas, who is asking that the court restore \$4 million in funding, and adequately fund the system going forward, told the *Eagle-Tribune* he's never seen the system function this poorly, "where wholesale parts of the dockets are just canceled indefinitely and there's no light at the end of the tunnel."

Douglas said he is aware of only one similar case: In 1971, The Philadelphia Supreme Court upheld an order that the state pay \$2.4 million to adequately fund the city's court system.